



Letters In a Box

By Jenifer Juris

Do you have a stash of handwritten love letters saved somewhere for safe keeping? I am sad to say that my honey and I didn't really have any physical letters that we wrote back and forth. When we weren't talking in person, we mostly emailed each other. I do remember that the very first text message I ever received was from him. I didn't have a phone that could text him back, but it was so cool to see those pixelated letters pop up on my small display that said, "I Love You."

While my title for this tutorial has us all thinking about handwritten notes, I'm actually going to show you a different kind of letters in a box. Keep reading to learn an easy way you can add a graphic look to your title by making a simple blocked letter design.

Step One: Open a Scrapbook Page

- Open the layered scrapbook page (File > Open) with which you would like to work.
- In the Layers panel, activate the top layer.

Step Two: Create the Base Rectangle

- Get the Rectangular Marquee tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon. Set the Feather to 0 and the Mode/Aspect to Fixed Size. (Photoshop: Set the Style to Fixed Size.) Set the Width to 1.35 inches and the Height to 1.75 inches.
- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the dialog box, choose a color and click OK. I used Hex Code #959595.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- On the scrapbook page, click once to create a selection outline.
- Press Alt Backspace (Mac: Opt Delete) to fill the selection with the foreground color.
- Press Ctr D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.



Step Three: Create the Top Rectangle

- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the dialog box, choose a contrasting color and click OK. I used Hex Code #cccccc.
- In the Tool Options, set the Width to 1 inch and the Height to 1.4 inches.

- On the scrapbook page, click once inside of the base rectangle to create a selection outline.
- Press Alt Backspace (Mac: Opt Delete) to fill the selection with the foreground color.
- Press Ctr D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.
- Get the Move tool.
- Press the Arrow keys to nudge the top rectangle into position.



Step Four: Add a Letter

- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- In the Tool Options, choose a Font and Size. I'm using Century Gothic Regular at 72 pts. (In earlier versions of PSE, set the Style to None.)
- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the dialog box, choose a contrasting color and click OK. I used Hex Code #959595 to match the base rectangle.
- On the scrapbook page, click once on the top rectangle and type your preferred letter. I used a lowercase "y." Click on the checkmark to commit the type.
- Get the Move tool.
- Press the Arrow keys to nudge the letter into place. I chose to place mine in the lower right corner of the top rectangle.



Step Five: Duplicate the Layers (optional)

- In the Layers panel, activate the top layer. While holding down the Shift key, click on the base rectangle layer to activate all three layers.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Duplicate Layers and click OK.
- On the scrapbook page, while holding down the Shift key, click directly on the rectangle and drag the duplicated layers into position.
- In the Layers panel, double click on the thumbnail of the top type layer to activate the type.
- Type a new letter and click the checkmark to commit the type.
- Get the Move tool.
- Press the Arrow keys to nudge the letter into position.
- Repeat the above steps as many times as needed to complete the title.
- Save the scrapbook page (File > Save).



Step Six: Finishing Suggestions

- Use this technique for titles that are short, between 3–5 letters.
- Use this technique for just one word of a longer title to add emphasis.
- Change the colors of the rectangles and letters.
- Use the layers as clipping masks. [Watch our free videos.](#)

In the end, I chose to use some papers and clipped them to my rectangles. I also added a drop shadow to the base rectangles to give the title more dimension. As you'll see in my scrapbook page below, my full title states, "this is so you," but I chose to use this technique only for the one word I wanted to emphasize. I can't wait to see the pages you create using this method. The options are endless! Please post your pages in the [Digi Scrap Tutorial Gallery](#) so I can see all the fun ways you choose to use your letters in a box.



Credits

Tutorial: Letters In A Box by Jenifer Juris

Software: Photoshop Elements 11, Adobe Photoshop CC 2014

Scrapbook page: So You by Jenifer Juris

Papers and embellishments: [Per Diem](#) by One Little Bird

Buttons, flower, and washi tape from [Fuchsia Kit](#) by Susie Roberts

Fonts: Century Gothic (Regular), At Mahogany Script